

What is claimed is:

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1. An electronic book (e-book) system, comprising:
a private network;
a central server connected to said private network, which stores a collection of electronic documents;
an e-book server which stores an electronic document selected from said central server converted in an e-book format for later downloading to a remote e-book terminal, via a public network; and
a host computer connected to said private network, which selects the electronic document from said central server, and uses a print function of an operating system to transfer the selected electronic document from said central server for storage in an e-book format at said e-book server for later downloading to said remote e-book terminal, via said public network.

1 2. The system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said host computer comprises an e-book
2 driver software to provide an interface with said operating system and to direct the selected
3 electronic document to said e-book server, and an emulation software to emulate said e-book
4 server as a token network printer in said private network.

1 3. The system as claimed in claim 2, wherein said e-book driver software is installed
2 at said host computer using an Add Printer Wizard provided by the operating system for setting
3 up said e-book server as a token network printer in said private network to print from the
4 operating system of said host computer.

1 4. The system as claimed in claim 2, wherein said emulation software is installed at
2 one of said host computer and said e-book server to emulate said e-book server as a token
3 network printer in said private network, and includes a conversion subroutine for converting data
4 reflecting the selected electronic document into an e-book format for storage at said e-book
5 server.

1 5. The system as claimed in claim 2, wherein said e-book driver software and said
2 emulation software are embodied on any of a variety of computer readable media for use with said
3 host computer.

1 6. The system as claimed in claim 2, wherein said emulation software installed at said
2 host computer emulates said e-book server as a token network printer and then converts the
3 selected electronic document into an e-book format, via said conversion subroutine, before a
4 physical redirection to said e-book server over said private network.

1 7. The system as claimed in claim 2, wherein said emulation software installed at said
2 host computer emulates said e-book server as a token network printer and then converts the
3 selected electronic document into an e-book format transferred from said host computer to said e-
4 book server, via said conversion subroutine

1 8. The system as claimed in claim 2, wherein said e-book driver software and said
2 emulation software installed at said host computer interacts with the operating system to transfer
3 the selected electronic document to said e-book server, via said private network, according to the
4 following steps:

5 activating said driver software, when a user selects said print function from the operating
6 system;

7 reading, at said driver software, data reflecting the selected electronic document from a
8 random-access-memory;

9 directing, at said driver software, data reflecting the selected electronic document to the
10 operating system for a physical redirection to said e-book server, via said private network;

11 activating said emulation software, when said driver software returns to a stand-by (idle)
12 mode;

13 receiving, at said emulation software, data reflecting the selected electronic document
14 from said driver software, via the operating system;

15 converting, at said emulation software, data reflecting the selected electronic document

16 into an e-book format and reformatting the data for said remote e-book terminal; and
17 transmitting, at said emulation software, reformatted data reflecting the selected electronic
18 document to the operating system for said physical redirection to said e-book server, via said
19 private network.

1 9. The system as claimed in claim 2, wherein said private network corresponds to a
2 local area network (LAN), and wherein said public network corresponds to one of a plain old
3 telephone service (POTS), a public switched telephone network (PSTN), an integrated services
4 digital network (ISDN), a mobile network, a satellite network, an Internet, a terrestrial digital TV
5 network, a cellular network, and a short-range radio (Bluetooth, Home RF protocol, wireless
6 LAN) network.

7 10. The system as claimed in claim 2, wherein said e-book terminal for use to
8 download or request automatic delivery of a selected electronic document stored in said e-book
9 format at said e-book server comprises:

10 an electronic module which provides a central processing unit (CPU) to control all
11 operations of said e-book terminal under instructions of the operating system, a BIOS read-only-
12 memory (ROM), and a random-access-memory (RAM) which provides the primary memory
13 space to write, store and retrieve information and program instructions used by the CPU;

14 a display and a display controller which support a visual display of the selected electronic

document on a display screen;

a power unit which provides power supply to said e-book terminal;

an updatable read-only-memory (ROM) which supports additional memory capacity;

a communication interface which supports communications with said e-book server via
said public network; and

a security unit which provides overall security to said e-book terminal.

11. The system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said selected electronic document is
printed from said host computer under instructions from a user for delivery to said e-book server
over said private network for later downloading, via said public network, to said remote e-book
terminal.

12. The system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said selected electronic document is
printed from said host computer under instructions from a user for delivery to said e-book server
over said private network and an Internet for later downloading, via said Internet, to said remote
e-book terminal.

13. An electronic book (e-book) system, comprising:

a private network;

a central server connected to said private network, which stores a collection of electronic

4 documents;

5 a docking station connected to said private network, which supports an e-book terminal to
6 receive an electronic document selected from said central server converted in an e-book format
7 for later viewing off-line; and

8 a computer connected to said private network, which selects the electronic document from
9 said central server, and uses a print function of an operating system to transfer the selected
10 electronic document from said central server in an e-book format to said docking station for
11 downloading into said e-book terminal for later viewing off-line.

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1 16. The system as claimed in claim 14, wherein said emulation software is installed at
2 said computer to emulate said e-book terminal as a token network printer in said private network,
3 and includes a conversion subroutine for converting data reflecting the selected electronic
4 document into an e-book format for downloading into said e-book terminal.

1 17. The system as claimed in claim 14, wherein said e-book driver software and said
2 emulation software are embodied on any of a variety of computer readable media for use with said
3 computer.

1 18. The system as claimed in claim 14, wherein said emulation software installed at
2 said computer emulates said e-book terminal as a token network printer and then converts the
3 selected electronic document into an e-book format, via said conversion subroutine, before a
4 physical redirection to said docking station for downloading into said e-book terminal over said
5 private network.

1 19. The system as claimed in claim 14, wherein said e-book driver software and said
2 emulation software installed at said computer interacts with the operating system to transfer the
3 selected electronic document to said docking station for downloading into said e-book terminal,
4 via said private network, according to the following steps:

5 activating said driver software, when a user selects said print function from the operating

6 system;

7 reading, at said driver software, data reflecting the selected electronic document from a
8 random-access-memory;

9 directing, at said driver software, data reflecting the selected electronic document to the
10 operating system for a physical redirection to said e-book server, via said private network;

11 activating said emulation software, when said driver software returns to a stand-by (idle)
12 mode;

13 receiving, at said emulation software, data reflecting the selected electronic document
14 from said driver software, via the operating system;

15 converting, at said emulation software, data reflecting the selected electronic document
16 into an e-book format and reformatting the data for said e-book terminal; and

17 transmitting, at said emulation software, reformatted data reflecting the selected electronic
18 document to the operating system for said physical redirection to said docking station for
19 downloading into said e-book terminal, via said private network.

1 20. The system as claimed in claim 14, wherein said private network corresponds to a
2 local area network (LAN).